(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these ships cannot be built indigenously;

(d) if so, the reasons for not building the same; and

(e) if not, the action taken to build the ships?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) No, Sir. However, the USA has agreed in principle to sell a Landing Platform Dock (LPD) to India. The ship could provide the Indian Navy enhanced amphibious capability. In addition, the LPD can be deployed for disaster relief operations. It can also function as a command and control platform during mishaps at sea like offshore oil installation fires and maritime air accidents. No LPD of this capability has so far been constructed in India.

Loss to Defence Personnel and their families in Tsunami

3084. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government initiated to conduct any assessment on the loss sustained to the defence personnel and their families due to the onslaught of Tsunami;

(b) how many military personnel belonging to Kerala sustained loss due to the above calamity, the district-wise details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to extend any financial assistance to the affected service personnel and their families and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) A total of 7 Air Force personnel lost their lives and 4 were missing during the Tsunami in Andaman & Nicobar (A&N) Islands. In addition, 1 personnel of the Military Engineering Service was also missing in the A&N Islands. 2 family members of an Army personnel also died in Kerala during the Tsunami.

(b) No military personnel belonging to Kerala suffered any loss of life during Tsunami.

(c) The compensation is paid to the next of kin (NOK) of the deceased Defence personnel as per the extant guidelines.

Occupation of 'Abbey House', Hyderabad by Defence authorities

3085. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 'Abbey House' owned by the Andhra Pradesh Government in Hyderabad has been under occupation of the Defence authorities since 1954;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Defence to hand over defence land to the State Government in exchange of 'Abbey House';

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the status of the proposal and the action taken thereto by the Ministry of Defence?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Abbey House was hired for Defence purposes.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The exchange proposal involves 13 acres 24 Guntas of State Government land including the Abbey House and 12.83 acres of defence land in Secunderabad Cantonment. The comments of the concerned authorities have been invited. No decision on the proposal has been taken by the Ministry of Defence.

Accidents in Ordnance Factories

3086. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of major and minor accidents in ordnance factories during the last five years, year-wise;